



GUIDELINES FOR CALTRANS PERMITS

Rev. October 20, 2015

The following guidelines have been created so that the CFC, Caltrans and the CHP may better serve the needs of productions applying for permits. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis only, and unforeseen circumstances may necessitate changes to these procedures. Please know that everyone involved will always do their best to accommodate your production.

CONTACTS

California Film Commission (CFC) Caltrans Permit Coordinator David Booth dbooth@film.ca.gov 323-860-2960, ext. 104	Caltrans District 7 & State Film Permit Coordinator Roger San Juan roger.san.juan@dot.ca.gov 213-897-0282 (off) 213-272-8517 (cell)	California Highway Patrol Statewide Film Media Relations Officer Kristi Cardoza Kristi.Cardoza@film.ca.gov 213-703-2070 (cell)
---	--	---

Go to: www.film.ca.gov/Permits.htm to submit your online applications for permits
Go to: www.dot.ca.gov/localoffice.htm to reference a Caltrans District map

APPLYING FOR A CALTRANS PERMIT

- Permit applications must be submitted to the CFC at least four business days (or 96 business hours) in advance of an activity. This will allow time for the CFC, CHP and Caltrans to properly assess the feasibility of issuing a permit.
- There is a 12 (business) day approval process for freeway closures, and complex closures may require 15 (business) days (or more in some instances). However, if you know more than 10 or 15 days in advance that you will be asking for a closure, submit your permit application as soon as possible. Depending on the requirements, at least one meeting with Caltrans, CHP, Fire and CFC personnel may be needed to discuss logistics. (See below for more information on freeway closure meetings.)
- When filling out applications, be as specific as possible. Include date(s), times, number of cast, crew and background players as well as activities. Indicate whether this is for a full closure, if you will require ITC (intermittent traffic control), rolling breaks, a CHP escort or if you will be filming with the flow of traffic. Indicate whether you will be doing car-to-car filming and if the camera car will have an arm attachment. Will you be bringing in a crane? Will you be shooting from a helicopter? Will pyrotechnics and/or stuntwork be involved?
- Carefully check insurance requirements by going to: http://film.ca.gov/Permits_Insurance.htm. Insurance documents that are not submitted on time or are incomplete may cause a delay or cancelation of your permit.
- For Caltrans inspection and monitor fees and CHP rates by go to: http://film.ca.gov/Permit_and_Monitor_Fees.htm.
- When submitting insurance documents or payment for inspection and monitor fees and/or when just emailing CFC personnel about your permit, be sure to reference the permit number.

- **Please note that at this time, CALTRANS is not issuing encroachment permits for UAS (drone) filming until an official Caltrans policy is drafted and approved.**
- Include details such as cross streets and mile markers. When requesting to film on freeway exits, specify the name of the off-ramp rather than the exit number.
- Pay special attention to the times and dates being requested – especially if the time noted runs into the next day. For example, if you’re requesting May 11 from 8:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m., you are actually requesting May 11 and May 12.
- Be aware that requests that are *too* broad may be denied. For example, the 12-hour activity window being requested may be rejected; whereas, the four-hour window of time actually needed for an activity may be accepted.
- Understand that numerous revisions submitted late in the process may require a new permit and the start of another 4-day approval process.
- Note that Caltrans will only close freeways on weekends – never during the workweek. And they **will not close a freeway two weekends in a row**. This practice is meant to minimize the inconvenience to motorists and area residents and to insure that certain freeways are not overused for filming – thus remaining available to productions in the future. Exceptions are rarely made.
- Freeways will not be closed for rehearsals. Exceptions are rare.

When you have questions about a specific Caltrans location, **start with a call to State Film Permit Coordinator, Roger San Juan – not the Caltrans district representative**. Verbal consent from a District Engineer does not constitute automatic approval of a permit. There may be other factors involved in processing and approving a Film Permit that the District Engineer has no knowledge of or control over. If you have any questions about the permit process or insurance requirements, call David Booth at the CFC.

As a general rule, one (1) permit may be submitted for multiple locations or for more than one day if the locations are within the same Caltrans district. (If you have any questions about district boundaries, reference the Caltrans’ district map (www.dot.ca.gov/localoffice.htm) or check with David Booth or Roger San Juan.) The activity to be performed should be the same at each location, and the days being requested should be consecutive. If not all the locations being requested are accessible or available for the days being requested, you may be asked to revise your application.

An applicant may be instructed to apply for separate permits under the following conditions:

- A request includes the use of a freeway *and* a state highway (even if they’re in the same district).
- A request includes an activity on a state bridge that requires special considerations (more than merely driving with the flow of traffic).
- A request includes locations that require road or ramp closures.
- A request includes multiple locations, activities and dates.

REVISIONS

Minor revisions are often accepted and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

A new permit application and possibly the beginning of a new 4-day approval process may be requested if:

- The original application has been approved and a permit has already been issued.
- There is a change of location and/or Caltrans district.

- There are too many major changes.
- Days are added that do not occur within the same week as the original permit.
- The scope of the work is different.
- The change entails a closure (which requires a 10-day approval process).

Keep in mind that revisions involving additional locations may necessitate:

- Additional CHP officers (also note that the CHP reserves the right to establish the number of officers required for any proposed production activity). If you have any questions about CHP involvement in your production, feel free to contact Officer Kristi Cardoza.
- A Caltrans inspector as well as added fees.

DENIALS

Permits/Revisions may be denied:

- If applications and/or changes are submitted too late and too close to the shoot date (especially those requiring freeway closures).
- If there are extenuating circumstances (ongoing construction, public events, etc.).
- If there are safety concerns about your proposed activities.
- Due to other agency considerations (such as LAX and the Port).
- By the area engineer.
- Your certificate of insurance is not complete.

FREEWAY CLOSURE MEETINGS

If you are planning a freeway shoot, you wish to film with the flow of traffic and won't require ITC or a closure, under most circumstances, a meeting will not be necessary. Otherwise, talk to David Booth or Robin Citrin at the CFC about setting up a meeting. More complicated shoots may require more than one meeting. If your show is based in the Los Angeles area, the meeting will be held at the CFC or the Caltrans District 7 downtown offices. For shows based outside of Los Angeles, the meeting will be held via conference call. Participating in the meeting will be members of the CFC, Caltrans and CHP as well as the Deputy State Fire Marshal (as needed). Also joining the meeting should be:

- All relevant members of the production team (location manager, UPM, line producer, 1st AD, transportation coordinator, stunt coordinator)
- A representative from your permit company, if applicable
- A representative from your barricade company
- A representative from any relevant agency (LAX, Metro, etc.)

A representative from the affected city will be notified and invited to the meeting, but you should also notify the city where your proposed filming activities will occur.

During the meeting, you will be informed of approximately how many CHP officers will be required and if CMS (changeable message signs) will be needed.

ONCE YOUR PERMIT HAS BEEN ISSUED

- Be advised that on the day of your shoot – if it is foggy, if it rains or has stopped raining but the surface of the freeway/road is still wet, your shoot will be canceled.
- Set lighting (such as Bebee lights) can never face ongoing traffic.
- You will be given a Freeway Closure Etiquette sheet to attach to your call sheets for the day(s) you will be filming on the freeway.

- If production vehicles will be driving onto closed sections of freeway, they should have placards on the windshield identifying the show/production, so CHP officers will know they are authorized to drive into restricted areas.
- An 11-foot fire/emergency lane must remain accessible on closed freeways. If production or picture vehicles are parked on the shoulder, the keys must remain in the vehicles, so they may quickly be moved if necessary.
- Closed freeways can never be used as base camps. Only essential production vehicles (portable restrooms and necessary equipment trucks) will be allowed on the freeway. Catering, craft service, hair/makeup, wardrobe, cast trailers, personal vehicles, etc. are to be parked at base camp.

Monitor and Inspection rates for Caltrans, CHP and Fire can be found at:

http://www.film.ca.gov/Permit_and_Monitor_Fees.htm

Please note that Caltrans inspection fees are charged at time and-a-half for weekend work and work done outside of normal business hours (8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.) on weekdays.

By following the guidelines set forth above, the permit process runs smoother for all of us. And as you can see, just as it is in production, these procedures are subject to many variables. Be assured however, that we will always do our best to accommodate your request for permits.

Thank you for your cooperation.